

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [01] with the following amended paragraph:

[01] Reference is made to co-pending United States Patent [[Applications]] Application Serial No. 09/991,389, filed November 21, 2001, Patent No. 7,136,871, issued November 14, 2006 entitled "Methods and Systems for Selectively Displaying Advertisements," the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by this reference.

Please replace paragraph [013] with the following amended paragraph:

[013] Unfortunately, with these new types of advertising campaigns, delivering a requested number of impressions for a specific advertiser becomes more problematic. There is a lack of commercially-available TV Ratings data to determine the number of households matching a particular interest, location or demographic target viewing during a specific timeslot, so targeted advertising inventory becomes difficult to calculate. Similarly, TV ratings cannot reveal the quantity of advertising inventory available from visits to the Electronic Program Guide or other on-demand media on the TV. Technologies that have been deployed for Internet advertisement delivery are better suited for these new types of TV-based advertisements, but these technologies typically require a persistent 2-way online connection, while Satellite, Cable and other broadcasters are often at best only intermittently connected to their customers' set-top boxes for 2-way communication.

Please replace paragraph [040] with the following amended paragraph:

[040] The embodiments of the present invention may comprise one or more special purpose or general-purpose computers, each of which can include computer hardware, as discussed in greater detail below. The embodiments of the present invention may further comprise multiple computers linked in a networked environment, which such network configuration is a local area network, a wide area network, a wireless network, [[,]]the Internet, or the like.

Please replace paragraph [063] with the following amended paragraph:

[063] When another instance of the electronic program guide is displayed, a new queue or list of available advertisement content is created that contains all available advertisement content for all

available advertisements, whether or not such advertisement content has been previously [[been]] displayed. Although this is illustrative of one embodiment of the present invention, other embodiments of the present invention retain the advertisement content of the first selected advertisement with the list or queue and allow for duplicate showings of the advertisement content of the advertisement.

Please replace paragraph [064] with the following amended paragraph:

[064] In addition to the above, each receiver module 20a-20n can track the number of advertising impressions displayed by receiver modules 20a-20n. For example, each time an advertisement is displayed to the target viewer, each receiver module 20a-20n generates a log of the displayed advertisements. This log is subsequently uploaded to control modules 16a-16n, whether periodically, sporadically, continuously, or the like, as historical data used to generate future schedules of advertising inventory and/or advertising impressions. Such historical data is also used to generate reports on the advertising campaign for use by the broadcaster or advertiser in analyzing the success of each campaign or to change the campaign as desired. In other embodiments, this type of tracking can be deferred until each receiver module 20a-20n determines to initiate the tracking, such as based on stored rules or information.

Please replace paragraph [0123] with the following amended paragraph:

[0123] Communicating with planning module 12 through network 14 is control module 16. Control module 16 includes a manager module 40, an advertising module 42, and a historical data module [[44]] 46. Manager module 40 is capable of controlling the delivery of advertising content associated with the scheduled advertisements to receiver module 20 for display to the viewer in accordance with the schedule defined in planning module 12 to achieve the advertising impression goal. Accordingly, manager module 40 receives from reservation module 32 data defining when the advertisement content of the advertisement is to be displayed to the viewer, an indicator of whether the advertisement is scheduled as committed or flexible advertising, and the advertisement's associated weight, the weight to be interpreted by receiver module 20 as absolute or relative depending on the committed or flexible advertising indicator. The manager module 40 receives such information or data continuously, periodically, sporadically, upon

request by an individual, in accordance with an individual's defined schedule, combinations thereof, or the like.

Please replace paragraph [0143] with the following amended paragraph:

[0143] Communicating with control module 16 is receiver module 20. Referring now to Figure [[4]] 8, receiver module 20 can include a central processing unit [[130]] 230 that uses computer-executable instructions implemented in software and/or hardwired logic circuitry to perform various functions. These computer-executable instructions, such as program modules, cause receiving module 20 to perform a certain function or group of functions. Generally, program modules can include routines, programs, objects, components, data structures, etc. that perform particular tasks or implement particular abstract data types. Computer-executable instructions, associated data structures, and program modules represent examples of the program code means for executing steps of the methods disclosed herein. The particular sequence of such executable instructions or associated data structures represents examples of corresponding acts for implementing the functions described in such steps.

Please replace paragraph [0144] with the following amended paragraph:

[0144] Processing unit [[130]] 230 can be coupled via a system bus [[132]] 232, which also interconnects various other system components of receiver module 20. Processing unit [[130]] 230 executes software designed to implement features of receiver module 20 including the features of the present invention. Processing unit [[130]] 230 can contain circuitry that is used to implement certain functions of receiver module 20. Instructions, data, and other software used to operate processing unit [[130]] 230 can be stored in a system memory [[134]] 234, such as read-only memory ("ROM") [[136]] 236 and/or in random-access memory ("RAM") [[138]] 238. Optionally, receiver 20 can include any mass storage device [[142]] 242, which is coupled to a mass storage interface [[140]] 240, as illustrated in dotted lines. ROM [[136]] 236, RAM [[138]] 238 and mass storage device [[142]] 242 are communicatively coupled to processing unit [[130]] 230 so as to be readable by processing unit [[130]] 230 and so that data may be written from processing unit [[130]] 230 to RAM [[138]] 238 and possibly mass storage device [[142]] 242.

Please replace paragraph [0145] with the following amended paragraph:

[0145] Optional mass storage device [[142]] 242 can be a magnetic hard disk [[144]] 244 or any other magnetic, optical, or other mass memory device that is capable of storing data. Any desired computer-readable instructions or data, including application programs and other program modules can be stored in mass storage device [[142]] 242. Mass storage device [[142]] 242 is one structure capable of performing the function of a computer-readable media for carrying or having computer-executable instructions or data structures stored thereon. In addition, mass storage device [[142]] 242 may be used to store and retrieve received media content, such as a media stream or other data delivered to the receiver. This computer-readable media can be any available media that can be accessed by a general purpose or special purpose computer. By way of example, and not limitation, such computer-readable media can comprise physical storage media such as RAM, ROM, EEPROM, CD-ROM or other optical disk storage, magnetic disk storage or other magnetic storage devices, or any other medium that can be used to carry or store desired program code means in the form of computer-executable instructions or data structures and that can be accessed by a general purpose or special purpose computer. When information is transferred or provided over a network or another communications connection (either hardwired, wireless, or a combination of hardwired or wireless) to receiver module 20 or some remote computer, both the receiver module 20 and remote computer, such as but not limited to control module 16, properly view the connection as a computer-readable medium. Thus, such a connection is also properly termed a computer-readable medium. Combinations of the above should also be included within the scope of computer-readable media.

Please replace paragraph [0146] with the following amended paragraph:

[0146] As illustrated, receiver module 20 communicates with a display device [[146]] 246, such as a television display, a flat panel display, a projection display, a computer monitor, or any other device capable of displaying viewable image data, through a video output [[148]] 248 and variety of different communication line connections known to one skilled in the art in light of the teaching contained herein. Additionally, receiver module 20 can communicate with an audio system [[150]] 250, such as one or more speakers for emitting sound data through an audio output [[152]] 252 and/or a signal recorder [[154]] 254, such as a video cassette recorder

("VCR"), capable of receiving video and/or audio data through video output ~~[[148]]~~ 248 and audio output ~~[[152]]~~ 252 and recording the data on a storage medium.

Please replace paragraph [0147] with the following amended paragraph:

[0147] The receiver module 20 can include a signal input [[156]] 256, which receives programming channels and advertisement content from one or more signal sources [[158]] 258, such as control module 16. These signal sources [[158]] 258 deliver single or multiple channels of programming to signal input [[158]] 256 via one or more different communication line connections, known to one skilled in the art, such as but not limited to electromagnetic radiation connection, such as wireless, UHF, VHF, microwave transmission, or the like, cable connection, or optic connection.

Please replace paragraph [0148] with the following amended paragraph:

[0148] According to another aspect, signal input [[156]] 256 can include one or more tuners [[162]] 262 capable of tuning to the programming channels deliverable by signal source [[158]] 258. Additionally, signal input [[156]] 256 can include one or more signal decoders [[160]] 260 optionally configured to (i) decipher the audio and/or video data representative of the programming channels received from signal source [[158]] 258, (ii) convert the data from an analog format to digital format, and vice versa, and (iii) decompress the audio and/or video data received from signal source [[158]] 258.

Please replace paragraph [0149] with the following amended paragraph:

[0149] According to another aspect of the present invention, signal input [[156]] 256 includes a modem [[164]] 264 that translates the digital signaling from the signal source [[158]] 258 into locally readable/executable internet content, including but not limited to: HTML, XML, Streaming Media formats and other common "Web" encoding methods enables receiver module 20 to display Web pages including text, graphics and other static media/data and streaming media or other continuous media from remote sources. In such a case, signal source [[158]] 258 can have the form of a remote computer, which forms part of the Internet or some other wide area network or local area network.

Please replace paragraph [0150] with the following amended paragraph:

[0150] Further, receiver module 20 includes various input/output interfaces [[166]] 266 that enable a user, consumer electronic devices, signal sources, or other suitable electronic devices to

deliver and receive data or information therebetween. For instance, illustrative input/output interfaces include but are not limited to serial port interface, parallel port interface, infra-red interfaces, wireless interfaces, a universal serial bus (USB), Small Computer System Interface (SCSI), or the like.

Please replace paragraph [0151] with the following amended paragraph:

[0151] In addition to the above functional aspects of receiver module 20, receiver module 20 includes an offline ad engine [[170]] 270. Offline ad engine [[170]] 270 is configured to receive advertisement content and one or more metadata files of the advertisements from control module 16. The advertisement content and one or more metadata files are stored in mass storage device [[142]] 242 and/or system memory [[138]] 238 and accessible by offline ad engine [[170]] 270. The offline ad engine [[170]] 270 is configured to retrieve the stored advertisement content and one or more metadata files of the advertisements at the prescribed time and thereafter display the advertisement content of the advertisement to the viewer through display device [[146]] 246 to achieve the advertising impression goal defined in planning module 12 (Figure 2).

Please replace paragraph [0152] with the following amended paragraph:

[0152] Accordingly, offline ad engine [[170]] 270 is configured to analyze the received advertisement content and one or more metadata files of the advertisement to interpret the information about the advertising type and weight of the advertisement to be displayed to the viewer in accordance with defined target criteria, i.e., at a particular time. Specifically, through analyzing the different advertising types (i.e. whether the advertisement is committed or flexible) and weights of different available advertisement content of the advertisement, offline ad engine [[170]] 270 is able to manage the selection and display of available advertisement. Consequently, offline ad engine [[170]] 270 facilitates the delivery of a sufficient number of impressions to conform to the requested campaign scheduled through planning module 12 (Figure 2).

Please replace paragraph [0153] with the following amended paragraph:

[0153] The offline ad engine [[170]] 270 has knowledge of committed and flexible advertising types. Offline ad engine [[170]] 270 is able to identify which advertisement, and hence

associated advertisement content, has been scheduled as committed advertisements and which advertisements have been scheduled as flexible advertisements by referencing the Ad Type attribute in the metadata files described above. The advertisement that has a committed attribute is "committed" to be displayed a certain number of impressions. Receiver module 20 has instructions to interpret the advertisement weight for committed advertisements as absolute weights. All other advertisements, i.e., filler advertisements having a flexible attribute, are used to fill in the remainder of the advertising inventory for a specific target criteria for the receiver module receiving the advertisements. Thus, the offline ad engine is capable of managing both absolute and relative weights for the advertisements to be delivered or displayed by receiver module 20.

Please replace paragraph [0156] with the following amended paragraph:

[0156] Using this technique of mixed absolute and relative weights for committed and flexible advertisements, advertisements are always available to fill advertising inventory and committed inventory will meet its overall impression goals. Further, this mixed technique enables offline ad engine 270 to display flexible advertisements over time depending on what committed advertisements are scheduled for the same time and target. Consequently, when offline ad engine 270 analyzes the received one or more metadata files and advertisement content for one or more advertisements to identify the quantity of advertisements available to be displayed to the viewer, offline ad engine 270 is able to "fill in" unused advertising inventory with the flexible advertisements. For example, in the event that a target area does not have sufficient committed advertisements to fill the available advertising inventory, offline ad engine 270 can select national or local advertisements that are rated as flexible advertisements to fill the remaining advertising inventory.

Please replace paragraph [0157] with the following amended paragraph:

[0157] The mixed weight system and the functionality of receiver module 20 and offline ad engine 270 can be demonstrated using the following example. In the example, local advertisements will be treated as committed advertisements and given absolute weightings, while the national and default advertisements will be used as flexible advertisements, which are given relative weightings.

Please replace paragraph [0162] with the following amended paragraph:

[0162] Upon receiving the advertisement content and the one or more metadata files for each scheduled advertisement, offline ad engine [[170]] 270 identifies the absolute weightings for the local or committed advertisements. The absolute weightings are calculated as the impression goal for the specific committed advertisement divided by the total inventory. Illustratively, when the weights are calculated based upon a percentage scale, i.e., a base factor of 100, as illustrated in Table 2, Ad1 has an absolute weight of 25% and Ad3 has an absolute weight of 50%. The total committed inventory is the sum of these two weights, i.e., 75% for the case when the weights use a base factor of 100, i.e., a percentage scale. Similarly, when the base factor is 1000 and the weights are 250 and 500 respectively, the total committed inventory is 750. In another configuration, the base factor could be 1, such that the weights are 0.25 and 0.50, with a total committed inventory of 0.75.

Please replace paragraph [0164] with the following amended paragraph:

[0164] Offline ad engine [[170]] 270 selects the relative weights defined by the individual during scheduling of the flexible advertising impressions, i.e., 10 for Ad2 and 1 for Ad4 and in association with processing unit [[130]] 230, offline ad engine [[170]] 270 defines a total flexible weight as the sum of available flexible advertisement weights. Subsequently, offline ad engine [[170]] 270 creates a mix of flexible advertisements to be displayed to the viewer by dividing the relative weight of the advertisements by the total flexible weight, and multiplying the result by the flexible advertising inventory percentage, as illustrated below in Table 3. Alternatively, offline ad engine [[170]] 270 creates a mix of flexible advertisements to be displayed to the viewer by dividing the relative weight of the advertisements by the total flexible weight, and multiplying the result by the flexible advertising inventory, when the base factor is some value different from 100, i.e., different from a percentage scale.